

POOR LEGIBILITY

ONE OR MORE PAGES IN THIS DOCUMENT ARE DIFFICULT TO READ
DUE TO THE QUALITY OF THE ORIGINAL

FOR C. S. C. AGENDA

INFORMATIONAL ITEM

Attached ☒ Future ☐ Per ☐
Item Number 101 Meeting Number 3/21
Distribution Date May 20, 1943

May 20, 1943

MEMORANDUM

Civilian Supply Committee

FROM: James W. Angell

SUBJECT: Carbon Tetrachloride Program for 1943

POLICY DOCUMENTATION FILE

Log No. 817

Class No. 535.1034
Carbon TetrachlorideA. Uses

Carbon tetrachloride is used mainly for cleaning and polishing preparations, fire extinguishers, agricultural poisons, processing and manufacture of food, chemicals, and rubber, and for other industrial and chemical purposes. The most important civilian use is a cleaning agent.

B. Existing Restrictions

Use of carbon tetrachloride is restricted under Order M-41, as amended.

Preference ratings of A-10 are assigned to such uses as fumigation of stored products; recharging fire extinguishers; processing and manufacture of food, chemicals, rubber etc., where substitutes are impractical; cleaning of metal parts of electric equipment; and degreasing of machines especially designed to use such solvents if used in manufacture of aircraft, motor vehicles, arms, and other direct war materials.

Preference ratings of B-2 are assigned to degreasing of machines especially designed if used for other functions than cited above; and for packaged spotting and cleaning preparations; dry cleaning establishments; and manual cleaning of non-absorbent articles other than metal parts of electric equipment. B-2 ratings restrict consumption for such uses to 100% of average monthly consumption during the year ending September 30, 1941.

The effect of Order M-41 in conserving carbon tetrachloride is not known accurately, but it is believed that no significant decrease in usage has been obtained.

C. Findings

1. Demand for carbon tetrachloride under existing restrictions including military demand is at the rate of 211 million pounds per year. This total indicated demand would require more chlorine for the production of carbon tetrachloride than is expected to be available in 1943 despite some temporary easing of the chlorine supply.

(28) 0201 VN

-2-

2. There will, however, be sufficient chlorine to provide more than minimum essential requirements for carbon tetrachloride. Present programming of chlorine indicates a probable production of 190 million pounds of carbon tetrachloride in 1943 with 134 million pounds available for indirect military and civilian uses. The proposed allocation for civilians is 90 million pounds as compared with minimum essential requirements of 53 million pounds. It will provide civilians with 77% of the amount consumed in the fiscal year 1941 and 80% of current unrestricted demand.

3. Earlier shortages of steel drums have been overcome and containers, therefore, will not limit the distribution of carbon tetrachloride as sharply as had been anticipated in the original preparation of the program.

4. Chlorine is difficult to store. The possibility of large and sudden increases in military demand necessitates its production at a high rate. The diversion of temporary surpluses of chlorine to carbon tetrachloride or other fixed derivatives is a means of meeting civilian needs while maintaining the availability of chlorine productive capacity for military needs.

5. Substitutes are for the most part impractical. Carbon tetrachloride is unique in that it combines solvent properties with non-flammability.

D. Recommendations

1. Minimum essential requirements should be provided in 1943.

2. When surpluses permit, allocations among civilian uses should be made in accordance with the proposals in table II.

3. Flexibility in meeting local and temporary excesses of chlorine by converting chlorine into carbon tetrachloride should be permitted (once converted into carbon tetrachloride the chlorine cannot be recovered). The total annual production should be as consistent with the proposed allocation as is practical.

4. No government stockpile is recommended as carbon tetrachloride requires special storage facilities. Private inventory capacity is considered sufficient and ample inventories are provided.

Comments

1. The program has been cleared with the interested Divisions.

2. A review memorandum on the Carbon Tetrachloride Program was prepared December 31, 1942 and submitted to Mr. Burns and Mr. Gay. Several suggestions in the review memorandum have been incorporated in the revised program. This program, however, represents a considerable revision of the original as a result of the fact that both the chlorine and the steel drum supply have eased in the last few months.

-3-

3. The program is in effect a residual one. The justification for providing more than minimum essential requirements for civilians is that it is necessary to keep chlorine plants in operation in order to maintain the plant capacity to satisfy increased military demands which are considered likely to develop toward the end of the year.

4. This program also provides estimates of minimum essential requirements, with the object of defining the most equitable distribution of carbon tetrachloride to civilian uses for such periods as minimum essential quantities of the chemical are available. It is suggested, however, that if less chlorine is available, other uses such as bleaching of pulp and paper should be curtailed before carbon tetrachloride production is reduced so much as to curtail civilian dry cleaning.

5. The proposed allocation will result in filling current direct military and civilian demand as follows: drugs and pharmaceuticals, limited; agricultural, animal and vegetable oils, rubber, synthetic, chemical and uses, 100%; cleaning and polishing preparations, 80%.

6. The program presents an estimate of total civilian demand for 1944 which is some 22 million pounds less than in 1943. It does, however, present a proposal as to how this further curtailment shall be distributed. I suggest that after some experience under the proposed allocation has been gained, the Chemicals Branch present estimates of carbon tetrachloride requirements for 1944.

Recommendation

On behalf of the Civilian Supply Committee I approve the carbon tetrachloride program.